



Iowa Department of Public Health
Promoting and Protecting the Health of Iowans

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To: Joe Teeling

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Re: Iowa Legislative Health Care Coverage Commission Workgroup IV: Wellness Proposal

For healthy communities to be successful and sustainable, a multifaceted approach needs to be implemented. Partnerships from all avenues in the community need to be engaged from local public health to small businesses. Successful public and private partnerships will be the catalyst in creating local economic engines. A strong commitment and understanding needs to occur from an individual and systems level.

We would like to share with you an Iowa-tailored community wellness model that has proven results from communities across the state. (Refer to page 15 – 36 of the attached 2009-10 Community Wellness Grant report.) This model could be duplicated, enhanced or modified to meet the needs of the Wellness Workgroup. Each community wellness Local Board of Health grantee completes the work of the locally-developed wellness initiative(s) through a local coalition that incorporates a private and public partnership to increase community impact and ensure sustainability. While many of the Community Wellness grantees already incorporate a diverse coalition membership, adding a requirement to include representatives from sectors such as from health care providers, school districts, local businesses, faith-based organizations, workforce centers, and local governments would ensure consistency amongst programs and create a stronger synergy to ensure the creation of healthier communities.

The infrastructure for technical assistance already exists within IDPH that can ensure accountability and consistency amongst programs within the state. Refer to pages 3-8 of the attached 2009-10 Community Wellness Grant report for a more detailed description of the technical assistance provided and components of the Iowa Community Wellness Grant model.

Policy and environmental changes have the ability to make the largest impact in creating a healthy Iowa. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's "*Recommended Community Strategies and Measurements to Prevent Obesity in the United States: Implementation and Measurement Guide*" provides 24 strategies promoting policy and environmental change impacting obesity at the local level. To view these strategies please visit www.idph.state.ia.us/iowansfitforlife/. The councils created under HF 2539 during the 2008 legislative session will continue addressing effective strategies to reduce health care costs and create a healthier Iowa. A supportive environment encourages healthy daily choices and activities. One of the Prevention and Chronic Care Management Council's recommendations addresses this goal:

Create a societal commitment to health through implementing policies to remove barriers that prevent Iowans from leading healthy lives. Empower and expect Iowans to take personal responsibility for being as healthy as genetically possible and improving their own health, as well as the health of those around them.

The Community Wellness Grant Model requires grantees to address how their efforts will result in healthier policies and environments. In Linn County's 2009-10 Community Wellness Grant project, a policy was developed and adopted at a childhood center. The policy eliminates unhealthy snacks

brought to school for special occasions, birthdays and holidays. Healthy alternatives were offered as ideas for parents. Parents sign the policy when they register their child.

The Iowa Healthy Communities Initiative Grant (CWG) Program could be enhanced to create an even larger impact by awarding a portion of the grants to communities who focus efforts on a coordinated system of initiatives in the areas of worksites, health care and education.

Worksites: Compelling data was just released by the Real Iowans Research Initiative that when available, more than 60% of Iowans participate in wellness programs at work. Policies encouraging workforce wellness initiatives can make Iowa a leader in building a healthy and strong employable workforce that can recruit businesses to locate in Iowa and bolster Iowa's economic landscape. Data shows that workforce wellness programs encourage a healthy economy with return on investment at a rate of \$4.91 for every dollar spent. Iowa Community Wellness Grant projects have promoted workforce wellness programs – In Woodbury County, the Siouxland District Health Department collaborated with partners to form a local worksite wellness coordinating council. A 2010 survey of area businesses revealed that 85% are offering a worksite wellness program; up from 66% in 2009. In Jefferson County, four local business/employers improved their worksite wellness policies improving employee's access to or time available for wellness activities.

IDPH has created a Healthy Iowa Worksites toolkit that incorporates a collection of active and eating smart tools for building worksite wellness programs. This toolkit is available to any interested business with an emphasis for small businesses that lack financial resources. IDPH does have one staff person who is dedicated to worksite wellness programs and provides technical assistance to CWG projects focusing on worksite wellness.

Health Care: Chronic diseases, including heart disease, cancer, and diabetes, account for seven out of every 10 deaths and affect the quality of life for tens of thousands of Iowans. Total costs related to chronic disease, including direct expenditures (e.g., health care costs) and indirect costs (e.g., lost productivity) amount to \$7.6 billion annually. To reduce the burden of chronic disease in communities and the health care system, the Iowa Community Wellness Grant Model could be expanded to require a portion of the proposed plans to incorporate health care system level strategies to include initiatives such as implementing or expanding Chronic Disease Self-Management classes, providing training on motivational interviewing for health care providers, expanding the number of certified medical homes, building systems for referral to existing health and human resources within the community, and implementing strategies for patient engagement to empower individuals to take individual responsibility. Successes and lessons learned will be shared with councils created under HF2539 to create recommendations to spread successful initiatives statewide. Iowa Community Wellness Grant projects have implemented Chronic Disease Self-Management classes. In Clayton County, nearly 75% of the Clayton County Live Healthy Live Well participants engaged in weekly physical activity events during the program; 60% of participants continue the physical activity levels after the series of classes. Physical activity during the class series from participant journals averaged 250 minutes per week. Availability of the program was promoted through a variety of entities including health care providers, fitness centers and faith-based organizations.

Educational Settings/Schools: With nearly one-third of Iowa youth overweight or obese, interventions to improve nutrition and increase physical activity in the school system are essential. The Iowa Department of Education Bureau of Nutrition, Health and Transportation in collaboration with the Iowa Governor's Council on Physical Fitness & Nutrition promote the USDA's HealthierUS School Challenge and Iowa Sports Foundation's Live Healthy Iowa Kids program to local schools as a way to create a healthier environment for students. Several Iowa Community Wellness Grant projects have implemented school-based wellness projects such as Iowa's own Pick a better snack™ & ACT classroom lessons. In Lee County's Community Wellness Grant project, the pre/post surveys using the CATCH program revealed the following results:

- Kindergarten through 2nd grade students reported a 12% increase in consumption of fruits and vegetables, and a 16% increase in being more physically active.
- Students in grades 3-5 reported a 7% increase in fruit consumption and a 3% increase in vegetable consumption.

IDPH Recommendations to the Wellness Workgroup:

- Maintain or enhance the current Iowa developed Community Wellness Grant model (HF2539) and funding that includes a structured IDPH technical assistance plan and promotes policy and environment change.
 1. Enhancements would create additional funding to support a competitive community wellness grant program requiring a system of initiatives in worksites, health care, and schools.
 2. Enhancements would offer baseline wellness funding to every county in Iowa using the Iowa Community Wellness Grant model. The wellness funds would allow low-resource communities to build capacity for a more comprehensive wellness program.
- Promote the use of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act's worksite wellness credits and offer statewide tax credits to businesses not qualifying for the Federal credits, using the Small Business Qualified Wellness Tax Credit plan (HF2539) as a model.
- Maintain councils created under the HF 2539 to continue addressing effective strategies to reduce health care costs and create a healthier Iowa.
- Collaborate with the Iowa Insurance Division to explore avenues to incorporate and incentivize worksite wellness programs within corporate health insurance packages.